



# The TURNTABLE

March 2011

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PAID & VOLUNTEER STAFF OF RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK

## Upcoming Events

### **Ladies Luncheons**

All Railtown ladies are invited to the monthly luncheons held at a new location each month. They are always held the 1st Thursday at 11:30am. March 3rd will be at the China House Restaurant in the Junction Shopping Center. April 7 will be at the Buffet at the Black Casino. May 5th in Jamestown at the C & C Mexican Restaurant on Hwy 108. Call Marge at 533-4595

**March 2, 9, 16, 23**  
Wednesdays, 10am-3pm. 'Telling The Railtown Story' training series

**March 5 & 12**  
Saturdays, 10am-Noon  
History of The Lumber Companies and the Sierra RR  
w/ Joe Sparagna

**March 19 & 20**  
GCOR Training  
Saturday & Sunday  
8am-5pm held at the Jamestown Community Hall

**March 19th**  
Volunteer Orientation

**March 26th**  
Car Host training day  
All day from 9am to 3pm with an interpretive train ride

## **Superintendents Message**

Although visitors wouldn't know it, this is an extremely busy time of year for us at Railtown. The steam locomotives are open, awaiting their annual FRA inspection (expected the week of the 7<sup>th</sup>), maintenance, repair and cleaning is underway on the cars and other equipment. Members of the engine crew and fire patrol have two training days under their belts, with two more to go before season opening, and we've created a little bit of chaos with the curator's office move, which will also free up space for a volunteer coordinator's office at the Freight Shed. Volunteer training and recruitment, however, are consuming the bulk of our time, at least on the Freight Shed end of the operation. Volunteer Coordinator Dave Rainwater is guiding new volunteers through the interview and intake process, and our official volunteer orientation has been re-scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> of March. We hope that all of our volunteers will take advantage of our new training series "Telling the Railtown Story". Scheduled for every Wednesday in March, these sessions are a valuable source of information on the site, equipment, history, and interpretive methods. If your schedule doesn't permit you to attend, we hope to have helpful handouts available. Speaking of handouts, did you know that we post all of our training materials, as well as our newsletters, online? <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers> If you have any photos you've taken that you'd like to share, send them our way and we can post them there as well. As we prepare for our opening weekend, we hope you'll be able to join us on March 26<sup>th</sup>, for our training day and "dry run". We'll be heading out onto the line for a "stop-and-go" training for car hosts, and have a public run at 2pm that day, to shake off the cobwebs before our opening on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, which is usually our busiest day of the year. Finally, we have been working to publicize Railtown in many different ways, and one of the most effective these days is social media. Towards that end, Railtown now has a presence on facebook. If you, your family or friends is a facebook user, please encourage them to "be our friend".

## **History of The Sierra Railway Class**

All new and returning volunteers are invited to attend Saturday March 5th and/or March 12 from 10am-Noon in the Carriage Room (Interpretive Center). Local historian Joe Sparagna has prepared two very informative powerpoints on the Sierra Railway, the lumber companies and Jamestown.



Joe Sparagna

## Railtown Happenings

### Fire Patrol Training date announced

It will be a day long class, held on Saturday April 30th. Please contact Rick Guantone for more information at (209)-763-2617 or Anthony LaNotte at (559) 645-5151

### New Volunteer Orientation Day Rescheduled

Due to bad weather, the new volunteer orientation day has been rescheduled for March 19th from 9am to 3pm. New volunteers who plan on attending the GCOR training class should attend and join us for smaller orientation session with Park Superintendent Kim Baker and Volunteer Coordinator Dave Rainwater on Wednesday, March 12th at 1pm.

### Volunteers Needed!

Please consider helping to prepare our Pullman cars for our upcoming excursion season which begins with our 'soft' opening train ride on March 26 at 2pm. Volunteers are needed to sweep, clean windows, etc. The cleaning and preparation dates are Saturday March 5th and 12th at 12noon (immediately after Joe Sparagna's history presentation). Contact our volunteer desk if you can be there at (209)-984-4408 or call David Deutsch at (209)-532-3520

### Home & Garden Show Volunteers Needed

Laverne Coon is coordinating this year's Railtown 1897 Park display at the Home and Garden show, which will be held on March 19th and 20 at the Sonora Fairgrounds. Volunteers are needed to staff the booth display in AM or PM shifts. If you'd like to help, call Laverne at (209)-533-4080. Its fun!

### Old Time Clothing Store Discount Offered

Peter Sprouse has generously offered a 10% store discount to all Railtown volunteers. His store, P & L Trading Post is located at 68 South Washington Street in downtown Sonora. (209)-533-3113. He has black vests.

## The Gold Nugget Award Presented To Engine No. 3

The Sierra Railway Engine No. 3 was selected for a Tuolumne County Historical Society Landmarks Committee Gold Nugget award. We will be presented the award at the 55<sup>th</sup> annual TCHS Lamplight Dinner, to be held at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds, Manzanita Building, on Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30. Dick Dyer will also be discussing 50 years of the Tuolumne County Museum at the Old Jail, and Patricia Perry will be honoring 50 years of the publication Chispa. If you'd like to join us for this fun night, tickets are \$30 per person and early reservations are recommended. You can obtain yours by sending a check to TCHS Attn: Lamplight Dinner PO Box 695 Sonora, CA 95370-0695. The mail-in deadline is March 28<sup>th</sup>. We also have order forms available at the Volunteer Coordinator's office.



**Say hello! Volunteers often ask who's who on our maintenance staff. You don't often see them all in one place at the same time, because some are part-time only. From left to right: Danny Taylor (Park Maintenance Assistant), Ryan Richelson ( Park Maintenance Supervisor), Rob Buchanan (Maintenance Worker I), Wendell Cushman (Park Aid), Ray Harm (Park Aid) and Phil Hard (Park Aid).**



## Volunteer of The Month - Ron Sloan

We often are not aware of some of the behind the scenes volunteering that happens on the other end of the park. Maintenance and restoration volunteers are often the unsung heroes, keeping our locomotives running, restoring the old cars or just helping to keep the place painted and the lawn mowed. Ron Sloan has been faithfully working on our steam locomotives since 1999, logging well over 300 hours of service a year. He grew up on a dairy farm near Spokane, Washington, and his first job was as a locomotive fireman on the Spokane to Portland run. A fireman's job is regulating the fire and water levels on a locomotive, keeping it at safe and appropriate levels. Nine years later, his love for photography (he is an avid train photographer) led him to study at the prestigious Brooks Institute in Santa Barbara. While living in Palo Alto he worked as an industrial and commercial photographer for many years until retiring and moving to Twain Harte in 1999. He had also served as a police reserve officer for 23 years and worked as a locomotive fireman on trips to Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo. You can usually find Ron in the roundhouse on Tuesdays or other weekdays when needed. He also volunteers with the US Forest Service on Saturdays monitoring off highway vehicle use. He says he enjoys the camaraderie with the guys the most here at Railtown. From all of us....Thanks Ron!



## Easter Egg Hunt

Volunteers are needed to help with this year's Easter egg hunt, to be held Saturday, April 23. We haven't announced who will be the Easter Bunny yet, but we also need volunteers to help with crowd control, planting the eggs, etc. It's always fun to see the young folks enjoying themselves and there is always a big visitor turnout for this day. If you can help, call the volunteer desk at 209-984-4408.

## Telling The Railtown 1897 Story Offers A Variety of Topics and Presenters

This year we are offering a more comprehensive training agenda with topics designed to help us all improve, not only our knowledge about Railtown and it's history, equipment and buildings, but also improve our interpretive skills. Our greatest mission at Railtown is to provide a quality experience both recreationally and culturally for our visitors. New interpretive ideas are in the works and we want to encourage all volunteers, new and old to join us. A complete schedule is being finalized and will be available on our sharepoint site at <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>. Different topics will be addressed each Wednesday. We are fortunate to have Joe Von Hermann (State Interpreter III) join us at 10am, Wednesday March 2nd. Joe supervises the PORTS program (Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students). He is a former park ranger at Railtown and an excellent interpreter with years of experience presenting parks programs to the public. Curator Kyle Wyatt and George Sapp our Railroad lead restoration worker will lead us on an informative tour discussing our steam engines and rolling stock. On Wednesday March 9th, Bob Gibson will be discussing the movies and Hollywood's role in keeping Railtown alive. Mike Rainwater will give a presentation on Railtown's historical buildings. After lunch we'll join Jim Mullin to see how he gives his tour, followed by another session with Kyle Wyatt. On March 16th, our park curator Lisa Smithson will speak on 'Preservation versus Operation' followed by a tour David Deutsch style. In the afternoon George Sapp will join us again with a session on interpreting our belt driven machine shop and the parts making process. Our last Wednesday session on March 23rd, begins with Park Superintendent Kim Baker's presentation on the Sierra No.3 and how it's restoration helps to perpetuate many of the old trades for future generations. Leroy Bushart will give us his model tour. There's lots to learn and do, and we hope you'll join us for as many sessions as possible.



**RAILTOWN 1897**  
State Historic Park

**PO Box 1250**

**Jamestown, CA 95327**

**Return Service Requested**



**TO:**

**Depot Store-** (209) 984-3953  
**Docent Hotline-** (209) 984-4408  
**Docent Site-** <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>  
**Railtown Blog-** [www.railtown1897.wordpress.com](http://www.railtown1897.wordpress.com)



### **Railtown Paid and Volunteer Staff Contact Information**

*Newsletter submissions: [RailtownNews@parks.ca.gov](mailto:RailtownNews@parks.ca.gov)*

*(all area codes are 209)*

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| <b>Kim Baker</b> , Park Superintendent                               | 984-4622 | <a href="mailto:kbaker@parks.ca.gov">kbaker@parks.ca.gov</a>           |
| <b>George Sapp</b> , Railroad Restoration Lead Worker (DSLE)         | 774-6368 | <a href="mailto:gsapp@parks.ca.gov">gsapp@parks.ca.gov</a>             |
| <b>Kevin Zimmerman</b> , Asst. Railroad Operations Manager           | 557-0294 | <a href="mailto:kzimmerman@parks.ca.gov">kzimmerman@parks.ca.gov</a>   |
| <b>Lisa Smithson</b> , State Park Curator I (DER)                    | 984-8719 | <a href="mailto:lsmithson@parks.ca.gov">lsmithson@parks.ca.gov</a>     |
| <b>Ryan Richelson</b> , Maintenance Supervisor                       | 984-3115 | <a href="mailto:rrichelson@parks.ca.gov">rrichelson@parks.ca.gov</a>   |
| <b>Rob Buchanan</b> , Park Maintenance Worker I                      | 984-3115 | <a href="mailto:rbuchanan@parks.ca.gov">rbuchanan@parks.ca.gov</a>     |
| <b>Danny Taylor</b> , Park Maintenance Assistant                     | 984-3115 | <a href="mailto:dtaylor@parks.ca.gov">dtaylor@parks.ca.gov</a>         |
| <b>Dave Rainwater</b> , Park Aid & Volunteer Coordinator             | 984-4408 | <a href="mailto:darainwater@parks.ca.gov">darainwater@parks.ca.gov</a> |
| <b>Kevin Zimmerman</b> , Engine Crew Caller                          | 557-0294 | <a href="mailto:kzimmerman@parks.ca.gov">kzimmerman@parks.ca.gov</a>   |
| <b>Ron White</b> , Stationmaster and Asst. Crew Caller for Car Hosts | 551-7087 | <a href="mailto:rbarryw@att.net">rbarryw@att.net</a>                   |

*Newsletter Available in Alternative Format on Request*